

## Ordinary Hero

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Summary: A brother and sister find danger, and a savior, on the streets of Gotham City.

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"\_There goes my hero/watch him as he goes/there goes my hero/he's ordinary\_," sings the car radio. Suddenly, the voice of the Foo Fighters disappeared with a **\*\*\_click\_\*\***.

"Hey! I was listening to that!" I flared.

"Sorry, sis. But I'm trying to not get us lost and the music is distracting me," replies my brother.

"What are you so worried about, Scott? The worst thing that could happen is we take a few wrong turns," I grumble.

"Abbey," my brother says in that I'm-the-big-brother-so-I-know-what's-best voice he has, "this is Gotham City. You don't want to take a wrong turn in this town. Especially at this time of night. If you do you're likely to end up in some neighborhood run by crack dealers."

Still annoyed, I just mumble something.

"Why you wanted to go art school here I'll never know. I mean, you did get that scholarship at Goodwin college up in Opal City. I hear the Opal is great for art types. Lots of old building and stuff for inspiration."

"Goodwin only offered me a \$2,000 scholarship. I got \$3,500 at Campbell College here," I retort. "Besides, Opal City is nowhere near

the size of Gotham."

"If you wanted the big city why did you ever leave Metropolis? You could have got to Met U with me," Scott insists.

"UGH! I don't want to go the same school as my brother!"

"And why not?!" he asks.

Way to go Abbey. Scott drives all the way down here to take you home for the summer and you go and insult him.

"Well," I fumble, "people would always be, like, 'Hey, are you related to Scott Clayton the senior?' And I'd be like, 'Yeah, he's my brother.'"

"Come on, Abbey, what's the real reason?"

As much as I love my brother there's one thing about him I hate--he always knows when I'm lying. "Okay, okay, it's just that having you there would beâ€¦"

"Yesâ€¦" he probes.

"Like having mom or dad around."

"I don't believe this!" gasps Scott. "You think I would have acted as mom and dad's spy if you'd got to school with me?!"

It's been a long times since I truly shocked my brother. I'm actually a bit proud of myself.

"Well, yeah. I mean, I'm eighteen. I've lived in Metropolis my whole life. You know what that means as well as I do. Supervillains, demons running loose in the streets, giant robots and alien invasions. Whatever Gotham throws at me I've dealt with worse back in the Big Apricot. "

"Granted, living in Superman's town keeps you on your toes, but why Gotham?" quizzes Scott. "Do you know how many insane, murderous, disfigured psychos there are in this town? This city attracts those people like flies. God, I'd hate to turn on WGBS one night and find out you'd just become another one of the Joker's victims."

"Oh, please. Do you know what the odds of--" I stop as I see the name of the street ahead. "Scott, I think this is where we want to make our turn!" I blurt.

"What!?! " Scott tries to make the turn but he's going too fast. He loses control and we skid right toward an \*\*STOP\*\* sign. God, please let me remember to buckle my seatbelt!

CRASH!!!

I open my eyes. The front end of the car is smashed and the \*\*STOP\*\* sign looks even worse. I glance over at Scott who's okay. "Way to go, big brother. Wait till dad finds out you wrecked the car."

"Stuff it, Abbey!" growls Scott as we get out to inspect the damage.

"Well, it looks like the motor survived. Still, this car isn't going anywhere. We're stuck," my brother mumbles as he inspects the car's front.

"Man, you have no idea how stuck you are," says a gravelly voice from behind me. The second I turn I know we're in trouble. There are two mean looking guys pointing guns at us. One is short, white, has a shaved head and is wearing leather clothes. The other is tall, black, has a crewcut, and is wearing a Bulls T-shirt.

"Who are you guys? What do you want?" I say. Dumb question. I know what they want.

"I'm Cuff, this is my associate, Slide," grins the white guy "We're with AAA. And what we want is you money. Right now!"

"Just do what he says, Abbey. Do what he says and we won't get hurt," says Scott. I can tell he doesn't believe a word of what he's saying.

A few seconds later our two muggers are stuffing all our valuables into their pockets. "That everything?" asks Slide.

That's when Cuff gives me a look that turns my stomach. "Not everything," he leers as he grabs me by the arm. "You ever been with a real man, baby?"

Eeeewwww!

"Hey, creep! Hands off my sister!" shouts Scott as he takes a few steps toward Cuff.

"Oh, a hero, eh?" sneers Slide. "Lemme show you how we handle heroes here in Gotham!"

The next few seconds happen in slow-motion. Slide's gun fires. I scream. Scott jerks in mid-step and falls to the ground.

Cuff curses. "Man, why'd you do that?! Now we got murder on our heads!"

"Quite worrying! Let's just take the girl and go!" hisses Slide.

"No! Let me go! Scott!" I yell as I struggle.

Shut up!" orders Slide. "Or we'll-"

"Leave her alone!" says a new voice. Before he can even turn Slide is hit by a blur that sends him to the street. His head hits the pavement with a whack and he doesn't move.

"What the--" begins Cuff as he points his gun at the blur. I can see a person now. A person in a costume? Before I can fully register what's happening something whizzes by me and knocks Cuff's gun from his hand.

I can see my savior clearly now. He's a kid in a red and green outfit with a yellow and black cape. He also has a big yellow **\*\*R\*\*** symbol

over his right breast. Is this Robin? I thought he was a myth like the Batman.

"Let her go," Robin says.

Cuff tosses me aside and takes a step toward the boy. "It's a bit late for Halloween, kid. Now run on home before I have to hurt you," the punk snickers.

"If you don't give up now, someone's going to get hurt, but it won't be me," Robin warns.

Pretty tough talk for someone who looks like he's not even old enough to drive. I hope he's more than just talk.

"You asked for this," snaps Cuff as he charges. Robin ducks down and nails him in the stomach. Cuff lets out a \_whuft.\_ Before he can recover, my attacker is on the receiving end of some martial arts moves I have not seen outside a Jackie Chan flick. In seconds, he is on the ground as unconscious as Slide.

"Nice moves. Where'd you learn that stuff?" I say.

"From the very best," Robin answers "Are you okay?"

"I'm fine, but-OMIGOD! Scott!" I scream. I run back to my brother. He's not moving. "Oh, Scott, please don't be dead! Please don't be dead!" I beg.

"Abbey?" he sighs. I'm so happy I start to cry.

"I'm here, big bro. Please don't die on me!"

In the background I'm only partly aware that Robin is talking to someone. "Yes, 911? There's been a shooting at the corner of Robinson and Harris. We need an ambulance right away."

"Thoseâ€¦guys areâ€¦theyâ€¦" Scott's asks.

"They gone, Scott. I'm safe. Now PLEASE don't die!"

"I've radioed for an ambulance," says the voice behind me.

I barely hear Robin's words. That's when everything becomes a blur. After what seems like forever (but probably was only a few minutes) the ambulance comes. I barely register the ride to the hospital and being looked over by a doctor while Scott is in the emergency room. But I'll never forget the moment the surgeon came out and told me he'd be okay. I felt a huge weight lift from my shoulders and I began crying again.

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"What's this?" Scott asks as I hand him a long, thin package wrapped in bright paper. It's a few days later and Scott's healing nicely. Lucky for him, the bullet missed all his major organs.

"It's a gift, stupid. Open it," I jibe. Boy, does it feel good to be

able to tease my brother again.

Scott rips off the paper and his jaw drops. "Jeez, Abbey, this is..is the best work you've ever done!"

I'm glad he likes my gift. It's a drawing I made of Robin. He's all decked out in his costume, looking heroically down on the streets from a rooftop. It's a little something to remind us both of the person who saved our lives. "Thanks. I guess almost getting killed inspired me."

For a second Scott gives a weird look. Then he busts out laughing. "Only you, Abbey. Only you could get a creative charge out of what happened to us!"

"Thanks," I say as I reach over to give him a huge hug. After a second, he hugs me back. I smile. I've never been this happy in my life. I'm alive and so is Scott.

It's weird, I lived in Metropolis my whole life and Superman never saved my life. Well, not directly anyway. He saved the city and the world tons of times, but never right in front of me.

Maybe that's just one of the differences between this city and Metropolis. Gotham has a different kind of heroes. In Gotham there are no guys who can run faster than lightning (that's Keystone City) or things like that. No, in this town the good guys don't have fantastic powers. The heroes of here are ordinary people. Ordinary heroes.

The End

Note: For the record, the Robin in this story was Tim Drake.

End  
file.